4256. e. 21

TWO ESSAYS

ON

JUSTIFICATION

AND THE

INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT;

IN ADDITION TO

FOUR THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS,

LATELY PUBLISHED.

By W. LUDLAM, B. D.

Rector of Cockfield, in Suffolk; and formerly Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LOCKYER DAVIS, IN HOLBORN,
PRINTER TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

MANY gracious *perſons, who differ from me, appear deſirous that I ſhould, for the ſake of men of piety and uſefulneſs, avoid objecting to any thing they have written: yet few of them, I believe, impoſe a like reſtraint upon themſelves; but think the importance of what they deem to be truth, juſtifies them in ſpeaking their ſentiments* PLAINLY *and* STRONGLY.

See the Preface to OLNEY *Hymns, by Mr. Newton.*

TWO
ESSAYS
ON
JUSTIFICATION
AND THE
INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Price 2s.

TWO

ESSAYS

ON

JUSTIFICATION

AND THE

INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Price 6s.

ESSAYS.

ESSAY V.

On Juſtification.

TO juſtify, is a forenſic term, and ſignifies, to vindicate the character of one who ſtands in the court under a charge of guilt; to clear him of the accuſation; to ſhew that he is innocent in law. In this ſenſe it is uſed in many parts of ſcripture—*Enter not into judgement with thy ſervant, O Lord, for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.* Pſ. cxliii. 2. And ſo Hervey underſtands it*—"When a cri-"minal has been found guilty, and is freed "from puniſhment, we may ſay of ſuch a one,

* Hervey's Theron and Aſpaſio. The edition quoted, is that of Edinburgh, 1775.

" he is *pardoned*; we never ſay, he is *juſtified.* " Then only a perſon is juſtified, when his " righteouſneſs is made as clear as the light." Page 326.—Again, " Pardon is founded upon " clemency in the judge; juſtification upon " righteouſneſs in the party arraigned." P. 327.

Now as thoſe who are thus juſtified ſtand in the court freed from condemnation, liable to no puniſhment, but are juſt perſons in the eye of the law; ſo thoſe who are pardoned and accepted in the beloved, are in ſcripture ſaid to be *juſtified:* and thus the ungodly and the heathen are ſaid to be juſtified, though not in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word (Rom. iv. 5. Gal. iii. 8.); and God is ſaid to juſtify them, not for the time paſt, but for the time to come. They ſtand now and henceforth in the eſtimation and favour of God, as if they were juſt perſons, as if they never had been ſinners. This we apprehend is the ſcriptural ſenſe of juſtification*; the word being put to expreſs the effects, not the act, of juſtification: and in this ſenſe Doctor Doddridge underſtands juſtification—" We are

* Juſtification is alſo uſed for temporal deliverances, and on the ſame ground. Thus Rahab was juſtified when ſhe was delivered from the carnage of Jericho, and treated as an Iſraelite, though ſhe was then an heathen; and this on account of her faith in the true God, being convinced by the miracles he had wrought.—Joſ. ii. 11, 12. See alſo Taylor's Key.

" juſtified

" juſtified (ſays he); that is, we, though guilty, " on complying with the goſpel, are finally " *treated* by God as *righteous perſons*, out of re- " gard to what Chriſt has done or ſuffered." Doddridge's Lectures, p. 413. 420.

But Hervey and others deny this (p. 341), and take the word in the original and ſtrict ſenſe. So p. 325, 326—" They (that is, ſinners) are declar- " ed righteous. They are pronounced righteous " in open court. Juſtice itſelf declares they are " without ſpot, and blameleſs." And Hervey explains the difference between Pardon and Juſtification, by the different caſes of Barabbas and Chriſt—" Of Barabbas the judge might " ſay, he is a notorious malefactor, but I re- " leaſe him; of Chriſt the judge actually ſaid, " I find no fault at all in him." And Her- vey adds, " that, to be accounted righteous, is " much ſuperior to the bare remiſſion of ſins; " it is, as the church expreſſes it, of unjuſt to " be made juſt before God."

Where the church tells us this, he does not ſay; probably in the Homilies. But the import of the expreſſion is evident—of unjuſt, in time paſt, made juſt, both now and for the time to come; exactly as we ſay of a man, that, of being covetous, he is now become generous.

Juſtification, in the ſcripture ſenſe, beſides bare remiſſion of ſins, implies alſo acceptance,

but we apprehend nothing more: this we ſhall conſider.

Mr. Milner ſays, "Juſtification is a purely "ſcriptural idea, and ſignifies not only the *for-* "*giveneſs*, but alſo the honourable *acquittal*, of "a ſinner at the bar of God, by declaring him "righteous in his ſight*." It is ſtrange that a writer who is uſually clear, ſhould join two ideas ſo incompatible, as that of an acquittal and forgiveneſs, in order to make up this purely ſcriptural idea of juſtification. He that is acquitted, wants no forgiveneſs; he that is forgiven, muſt be firſt found guilty. And an honourable acquittal, if it means any thing, means an acquittal, not only from a charge of actual guilt, but from all ſuſpicion of it: it implies a public declaration of perfect innocency in the party before the court; a vindication for all the time that is paſt. And where is it ſaid in ſcripture, that ſuch is the declaration of God reſpecting ſinners, even redeemed ſinners? The Apoſtles ſay nothing of ſuch a *declarative* juſtification; nor is it to be found in the Articles of the Church of England. It is ſaid, *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſin no more. I will caſt their ſins into the depth of the ſea.* But ſurely ſuch metaphorical expreſſions do not imply that ſinners are acquitted of having been ſinners; or

* Milner's tract againſt Gibbon, p. 103.

that

that ſinners are made not to have been ſinners. This we are told is to be effected by a conveyance of the moral character of Chriſt to ſinners; ſo that his righteouſneſs, by an *act of imputation*, is to become their righteouſneſs. H. Vol. II. p. 69; which act, as Hervey ſays, Vol. I. p. 325, "puts us in poſſeſſion of a perfect righteouſneſs." The righteouſneſs of Chriſt is to become the righteouſneſs of ſinners, not figuratively, but literally their perſonal righteouſneſs*. Otherwiſe how can their perſonal character be vindicated? How can they have a title to life *ſuo jure?* as Hervey ſays, p. 327.

And the neceſſity of ſuch a vindication we learn, not from the ſcripture, but the metaphy-

* Dr. Doddridge defines imputation thus: "The righteouſneſs of *A* may be ſaid to be imputed to *B*, if on "account of it *B*, though a ſinner, be treated as if he were "righteous." According to this definition, the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to a ſinner, and the juſtification of a ſinner by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, will mean one and the ſame thing; and juſtification by imputation, will be mere tautology.—See Doddridge's Lectures, p. 413. 420.

Of the ſeveral texts brought to ſupport this notion of a transfer of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, the greater part of them will appear to be nothing to the purpoſe, if we obſerve that *righteouſneſs* does not always ſtand for *holineſs*, for a moral quality; but for mercies, for deliverances, vouchſafed to us, or to the perſons who are ſaid to have righteouſneſs, that is, deliverance, in or through another.—Judges, v. 11. Pſ. iv. 1. cxliii. 1. Iſaiah, xlv. 24. Jer. xxiii. 6. Dan. ix. 24. Rom. iii. 22. 2 Pet. i. 1, &c. See Taylor's Key.

ſics of the ſchools. It is a maxim of the ſchools, that the demands of the law muſt be ſatisfied, and the honour of the law vindicated *. Now the law demands of every one a perſonal, not a vicarious obedience. The perſonal obedience

* We no where find in the New Teſtament any thing ſaid about magnifying the law, vindicating the law, or the honour of the law, &c. The Apoſtles make no compariſon between the *actual* obedience of Chriſt alone, and the *poſſible* obedience of all mankind, or ſhow how the honour done to the law in the former caſe, is ſuperior to that done in the latter. Nor do they tell us how the honour done to the law, by the obedience of Chriſt, compenſates for the diſhonour done by the diſobedience of ſinners.—See Sermons intitled Meſſiah, Vol. I. p. 95.

The whole of theſe notions is ſpun out of one obſcure text in Iſaiah, xlii. 21—*The Lord is well pleaſed* (with the Jewiſh nation) *for his righteouſneſs ſake* (for his mercies ſake). *He will magnify the law, and make it honourable.* Biſhop Lowth, correcting the Hebrew, tranſlates the latter part of the verſe thus:

He hath exalted his *own praiſe*, and made it glorious.

And with this agree the Greek and Arabic. See the Polyglot.

But if we take the common reading of the Hebrew, it will not follow that Chriſt's obedience is to compenſate for the injury done to God's honour by the diſobedience of ſinners. The law of Moſes contained the whole Jewiſh polity, and may be put for their ſtate and government, at the time of Iſaiah, in a very low condition. God here declares that he will raiſe it up, and make it honourable among the nations round about.—See verſes 24, 25, and ch. xliii.

of

of Chriſt muſt therefore be made to become the perſonal obedience of ſinners, that they may be juſtified or vindicated from the charge of having broken the law. So Hervey, p. 341—"In "order to juſtification, that *muſt* be imputed "which anſwers the demands of the law. Now "nothing can do this but the righteouſneſs, "the *very righteouſneſs*, of Chriſt." See alſo p. 335, 336.—And ſinners muſt be thus juſtified (that is, ſhown to be no ſinners), becauſe it is inconſiſtent with the honour of God, ſay the ſchool-men, to admit ſuch into his preſence *—no, not though redeemed with the precious blood of Chriſt—no, not though created anew in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. The righteouſneſs of Chriſt being then made over to ſinners, or, as Hervey ſays, p. 41, being wrought out

* The means through which ſinners are pardoned and accepted, are of ſo aſtoniſhing a magnitude, as to leave no doubt but the honour and juſtice of God's government are conſidered and amply ſecured, whether we ſee how this is done or not.

Sinners muſt be made meet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light. Their ſanctification is begun now, whenever they are *born of water, and of the ſpirit*. It will be completed at the laſt day; when they ſhall be admitted into the preſence of God, by our Lord himſelf, with that glorious introduction, "*Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the king-*"*dom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.*" Then alſo will their juſtification be both public and complete.

for them, and imputed to them *, theſe tranſgreſſors of the law are ſuddenly metamorphoſed into keepers of the law. And this, ſays Hervey, is the cauſe of our juſtification, which then follows on the principles of ſtrict juſtice. See Vol. II. p. 90. 92, and preface to Vol. I. and p. 329. And thus eternal life is not the gift of God in direct terms; but God conveys Chriſt's righteouſneſs to ſinners, and then they can demand eternal life.—A ſcholaſtic ſubtilty this, to vindicate the honour and juſtice of God.

Sinners may undoubtedly be abſolved, that is, freed from the poſitive penalties, and all the natural conſequences, of ſin unpardoned—the wrath of God, the dread attending it, &c.—freed from remorſe of conſcience, which may be turned into joy, for the greatneſs of their deliverance, which they will then fully ſee—joy for their reception into God's favour—and all afflicting thoughts may be ſwallowed up by love and gratitude to their Redeemer, who giveth them the victory †. But yet the moral nature of an action paſt cannot be changed, nor can an action done be recalled, that is, made not to have been done; nor the actions of one perſon made to

* Righteouſneſs is a quality of an action, and inſeparable from it; *a righteouſneſs* (in the abſtract) *wrought out*, is nonſenſe. See alſo Hervey, p. 335, 336.

† Wonder and joy ſhall tune my heart,
And love command my tongue. WATTS.

become

become the actions of another. It is not the falſity of theſe ſchool doctrines that we object to, but their abſurdity. They are contradictions in terms, and rank nonſenſe: yet theſe are ſometimes repreſented as doctrines of the ſcripture and of the Church of England.

Thoſe who have been ſinners, muſt always appear, in the ſight of God, as having been ſuch. They muſt all ſtand in his preſence as ſinners; but a great multitude, which no man can number, as redeemed ſinners; as redeemed by the precious blood of Chriſt, as accepted in the beloved, as waſhed, as ſanctified, as juſtified in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by the ſpirit of our God—juſtified, not in a ſtrict forenſic ſenſe, but in a ſcriptural ſenſe; in that ſenſe which the Church expreſſes very properly, when ſhe ſays, in the eleventh Article, "We are *accounted* righteous before God;" that is, treated, dealt with, as being, and as ever having been, righteous.

Having endeavoured to ſettle the ſcriptural idea of juſtification, we come now to enquire what is the *meritorious cauſe*, as the logicians call it*, of the juſtification of a ſinner; in other words, what are the grounds, or what is the conſideration, on which God does receive any

* Burgerſdicius's Logic, lib. i. cap. xvii. ſect. 24.

ſinners

ſinners at all into his favour, treating them as if they were perfectly righteous. And let it be remembered, the queſtion is entirely about the juſtification of ſinners, not of the righteous.

It is evident the ground of forgiveneſs and acceptance, muſt be ſomething done either by the ſinner himſelf, or by another in his behalf; either his own merit giving him a right to juſtification, or the merit of another; in which caſe he muſt receive juſtification as a favour. Let us then examine what his merit is. He has kept the law in many inſtances, and perfectly too, you are pleaſed to ſay. Yet, if he is a ſinner, ſurely he has broken the law in ſome inſtances, and kept it imperfectly in others. Be as partial to the ſinner as you will, what does his merit amount to? Why, that he has not broken the law in ſo many inſtances as he might have done. And thoſe inſtances in which he has kept the law, was it not his bounden duty? He that keeps the law, may merit reputation among men, but has no demands upon God. Place the merit of good works as high as you pleaſe, they can demand no more from God's juſtice than impunity, as far as they go. Innocence, that is, the abſence of ſin, has no ſtrict title to any thing further than impunity. *Can a man be profitable to God?* Eternal life is the gift of God through Chriſt, not the wages of man's ſervice.

ſervice. God requires obedience to his laws, not for his benefit, but for ours; for our common happineſs here, and to beget in us habits of holineſs, and a meetneſs for the inheritance of the ſaints in light hereafter. And does the keeping of the law, in ſome inſtances, give an exemption from the penalties denounced againſt the breach of it in other inſtances *? What is this but a licence to ſin with impunity?—No, you ſay, we do not look for this; but ſuch a ſinner as we have ſuppoſed, is ſurely an object of mercy.—Is mercy, then, a matter of right to be demanded by ſinners at their pleaſure, whenever they think themſelves proper objects of it? Whether juſtice muſt have its courſe or not, by no means depends wholly on the character of the criminal, or even the moral nature of the act. When Dr. Dodd committed a forgery, he returned the money borrowed on the forged bond; no one was injured; the immorality a trifle—he meant only to borrow the money: and he pleaded that he had been inſtrumental

* A queſtion has been propoſed—Can the voluntary neglect of any one duty be compenſated by ſtrictneſs of attention to other duties?—What is the meaning of *compenſated?* God ſuſtains no damage by our neglect of duty. Does this attention to other duties, abrogate the law, which denounces a penalty on the voluntary neglect of any duty whatever? Or does it change the moral nature of ſuch neglect, and make it no ſin?

in

in promoting many uſeful charities. Yet all in vain—the intereſt of the community at large required that ſtrict juſtice ſhould take place. And ſhall we preſume to determine when mercy may be extended, and when juſtice muſt take its courſe, in the divine government? No doubt but we ſhall be favourable enough to ourſelves. In ſhort, the plea of having kept the law in ſome inſtances, in excuſe for having broken it in others, is never allowed in any human court of judicature; and ſhall we preſumptuouſly rely upon it, or rather demand its admiſſion, in the divine government? The queſtion whether ſinners are to expect juſtification by their own works or no, could never have been made a queſtion, if both ſides had not agreed to keep the meaning of the queſtion as much out of ſight as poſſible, and to fight in the dark.

We conclude then, in the words of the church, that we are juſtified only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and not for our own works or deſervings. The merit of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, ſtrictly ſpeaking, is perſonal, and cannot be transferred to another; his obedience is his own obedience, not ours. But the reward of his obedience may be transferred; or rather, as a reward of his merit, it is given to him, to quicken, even in this life, whom he will; and he gives to them

that

that receive him, even to them that believe on his name, power to become the ſons of God. As ſons by adoption, they are now forgiven, and received into God's favour: in other words, they are in a ſtate of juſtification; and being juſtified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Rom. v. 1.

But it will be aſked, Who are thoſe whom God will juſtify? Certainly not thoſe who obſtinately perſiſt in a courſe of wilful ſin; and as certainly thoſe only, who accept of juſtification in the way he offers it—by the blood of Jeſus: thoſe only, who acknowledge they are juſtified freely by his grace; thoſe only, who own their obligation and duty to Chriſt; own him in his divine character, own him in all his offices: ſo that at laſt we may ſum up the conditions of ſcripture juſtification in the words of St. Paul; *Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

There are who ſay, we are juſtified partly by works, and partly by faith in Chriſt. Perhaps they have no diſtinct meaning to theſe words; but if they ſpeak of the meritorious cauſe of our juſtification, this opinion cannot be admitted: for if the merit of our own works is a reaſon for juſtification in part, for pardon in ſome inſtances, why not in all? Who are they that can ſo nicely balance merit and demerit againſt each other,

other, or ſay how far our merit can juſtify, and where that of Chriſt muſt come in? Nor is the office of the Redeemer, or the merit of our juſtification, to be thus ſhared between Chriſt and ſinners themſelves. The ſcripture ſays, we are juſtified by his blood; not partly by his blood, and partly by our own merit. "By the righteouſneſs of one, the free gift came upon all men, "unto juſtification of life. We are juſtified "freely by his grace, through the redemption "that is in Jeſus Chriſt." So ſays the ſcripture; but how is this if we can, in part, redeem or juſtify ourſelves? For ſurely to him that worketh (as far as he worketh) is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. We have before ſhewn, that our compliance with the law in ſome inſtances, cannot repeal that part of the law we do not chuſe to comply with. Merit, or, more properly, pretended merit, can avail nothing to our juſtification before God.

But though we deny that any ſinner can be juſtified by his own merit; and affirm, that in this reſpect all are alike concluded under ſin; yet we mean not to deny that there is great difference between the merit, or more properly the demerit, of ſinners.

There is, to be ſure, a great difference between the moral character of one man and another, and that in the ſight of God as well as man:

man: and this difference is the ground of favourable diſpenſations in this world to pious perſons, in preference to others, eſpecially of ſpiritual favours*. So the prayers and alms of Cornelius came up for a memorial before God; and he was therefore choſen out of all the heathen, to be the firſt who ſhould be called to Chriſtian ſalvation†. His character, as a pious worſhipper of the true God, alſo made him fit to receive the Chriſtian revelation; ſo that this diſpenſation was wiſe, as well as favourable to piety and virtue. Yet his prayers and his alms could not juſtify him before God: he could be juſtified only by faith in Chriſt, who is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption; and for this end he was directed to ſend for Peter, who ſhould tell him what he ought to do. If his own works could have juſtified him, all this would have been needleſs.

And as there is a difference between the characters of men, ſo there will be a difference in their final allotment. Luke xii. 47, 48.

* Gen. vi. 8. xviii. 19. Pſ. lxxviii. 70. Heb. xi. 5.

† The diſpenſations of God are of vaſt extent in their effects. This was not only a mercy to Cornelius, but was alſo intended to convince Peter, and the other Apoſtles, that the middle wall of partition was now broken down, and that God alſo to the Gentiles had granted repentance unto life.

Nay,

Nay, in that of redeemed ſinners alſo. Luke xix. 16—19.

It is ſometimes ſaid, we are juſtified by *faith only*, in oppoſition to *works*. Thoſe who ſay this, mean to ſpeak only of the meritorious cauſe of juſtification; they mean to affirm, that Chriſt is the only ground on which God accepts ſinners. If we further aſk, What are the qualifications of thoſe whom God will juſtify? The anſwer, according to ſome, will be, faith and works jointly; according to others, faith only; and yet they may both mean the ſame thing: for the former mean not to ſay that works are, in any degree, the meritorious cauſe of our juſtification; nor the latter to deny the neceſſity of an holy life, as a qualification. This you will find, if you will but have patience to hear them out*. We are juſtified by faith only, ſay theſe latter; but not by a faith which hath not works, and which is dead; but by a faith which is productive of, and evidenced by, works: not by a mere perſuaſion that Chriſt died for the ſins of mankind, for the devils believe this; but by ſuch a perſuaſion as ſuit-

* To deny the neceſſity of good works, or to maintain the ſufficiency of their merit for ſalvation, are equally dangerous errors; which men often charge upon one another, becauſe they will not let each other explain the meaning of their own expreſſions.

ably

ably influences the will and the affections; a faith which worketh by love. And theſe latter perſons further obſerve, that the moral nature of every action depends on the motives and grounds on which it is done*: therefore our imperfect works, if accepted through Chriſt (and they can be accepted on no other ground), muſt be done out of a principle of love and obedience to Chriſt. However imperfect the works, the principle muſt be kept inviolate; and to preſerve the principle inviolate, there muſt conſtantly be the moſt earneſt endeavours. A voluntary remiſſneſs in duty is, as far as it goes, a giving up of principle. Phil. iii. 13. And we cannot (ſay theſe ſame perſons) allow of that proud and arrogant ſpirit in ſinners by nature and by practice, which refuſes mercy in the way God is pleaſed to offer it; which demands the kingdom of heaven as a matter of right; which ſcorns to be juſtified through the redemption that is in Chriſt; counts the

* See the xth and xiiith Articles. It is through the preventing grace of Chriſt, and from the inſpiration, or influence, of his ſpirit, that all holy deſires, all good councils, and all juſt works do proceed. Therefore works done before, or in excluſion of theſe, on the preſumptuous principle of ſelf-righteouſneſs, are not done on a proper motive—cannot be pleaſing to God, though they may be beneficial to men.

blood of the covenant an unholy thing; and does deſpite to the ſpirit of grace.—And ſurely we muſt, on this occaſion at leaſt, *give to theſe perſons the right hand of fellowſhip.*

ESSAY

ESSAY VI.

On the Influence of the Holy Spirit.

IN A LETTER TO A CLERGYMAN LATELY ORDAINED.

Reverend Sir,

I SHOULD not have intereſted myſelf ſo much in your ſucceſs, had I not entertained great hopes, both from perſonal knowledge, and the teſtimony of others, that you would prove an uſeful miniſter of the goſpel. And now that you are admitted into orders, I beg leave to addreſs a few words to you, on the doctrines you are to preach to the people. Far be it from me to uſurp *a dominion over your faith.* No!—judge for yourſelf: but I muſt ſay, it will give me comfort and ſatisfaction, if, upon mature deliberation, you decline to preach the peculiar doctrines of certain writers, among which I reckon their notion of a DIVINE TEACHING; and which I think is the ground, or at leaſt greatly confirms them in all their miſtakes. Be not ſtartled—I do not mean ſuch a teaching as

the ſcripture ſpeaks of; but ſuch a one as *they* every where ſuppoſe in their ſermons and tracts. For though the name is alike, I apprehend the thing meant is very different.

It is undoubtedly true that the ſcripture uſes this phraſe, *taught of God*, to ſignify the influence of the holy ſpirit: but then how is that influence deſcribed?—as an influence on the WILL and AFFECTIONS; not as conveying knowledge, in a *ſupernatural* way, directly to the UNDERSTANDING. And this will be ſufficiently made out, if we ſhow, in the courſe of this Eſſay, that the paſſages of ſcripture brought to prove ſuch a divine teaching as this, are miſinterpreted: for it is unreaſonable to require a direct proof of a negative.

Divine knowledge, we apprehend, is now to be acquired only by the ordinary means of acquiring knowledge of every ſort; though it was otherwiſe in the times of the Apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians *. The ſpirit undoubtedly inclines

* The Apoſtles were forbidden to rely upon, or even to uſe, the ordinary and natural means of defending their conduct when accuſed. Luke xii. 11, 12. xxi. 14, 15.—And the firſt Chriſtians were poſſeſſed of many extraordinary gifts—not only miracles and tongues; but the word of wiſdom, the word of knowledge, the gift of propheey (or preaching), the underſtanding of myſteries (or difficult parts of ſcripture); and all theſe, like the gift of tongues, without ſtudy on their part.—1 Cor. xii. xiv. 1. 31. 39.

the

the will to ſeek for information in divine ſubjects, as well as to obey the truth when known—to ſeek for information by the ordinary means appointed of God; that is, reading the ſcriptures, and the inſtruction of miniſters. So the Lord is ſaid to have opened the heart of Lydia, ſo that ſhe *attended* unto the things that were ſpoken of Paul *. The ſpirit alſo removes prejudices; prepares us to receive inſtruction, does not convey it; gives tempers more pliant in learning, more firm in retaining, divine truths; gives a right underſtanding, not of this or that doctrine, but a general bleſſing on the means, making them effectual.—St. Paul ſays to Timothy, *Conſider what I ſay* (here is the means); *and the Lord give thee underſtanding in all things* (here is the bleſſing in general terms). It would be abſurd to pray that God would give us an underſtanding of ſuch particu-

* When Cornelius was called to Chriſtian ſalvation, he was not taught the chriſtian faith, either by the Angel or by the Holy Spirit; but directed to ſend for Peter. The Holy Ghoſt indeed *fell on all them which heard the word*; not to inſtruct them, when Peter was preſent for that very purpoſe; but to convince Peter, and the other Jews, that the Gentiles were admitted to be fellow heirs of the promiſe: for *tongues are a ſign to them that believe not*. And this is the concluſion the Apoſtles and Elders make, Acts xi. 18.

It is added—*Then prayed they Peter to tarry certain days*: undoubtedly, that he might *expound unto them the way of God more perfectly*. The ſpirit inclined their hearts, but Peter informed their underſtandings.

lar doctrines as we are literally taught by the ſpirit: the teachings of the Spirit of Truth can neither be obſcure nor ambiguous. So Epheſians, i. 17, 18; where an enlightened underſtanding does not mean an underſtanding informed, in point of knowledge, by the ſpirit, but whoſe prejudices are removed: and we uſe this phraſe, "an enlightened underſtanding," for an underſtanding prepared and fitted to receive knowledge, much oftener than for an underſtanding actually informed. Oppoſed to this is a darkened underſtanding (Eph. iv. 18); which is expounded by a blindneſs of *heart*, a ſtate of the affections prejudiced againſt the truth, and which *will* not ſee it. The *heart* is put metaphorically for the affections, as the *head* is for the underſtanding; hardneſs of the heart is put for a perverſeneſs of the will, which refuſes to obey the truth (Exod. vii. 13): and it is of ſuch that Chriſt ſays, "*Ye will not come unto* "*me, that ye might have life.*"—Hardneſs of heart is alſo put for a particular ſtate of the affections: of ſuch it is ſaid, *they are paſt feeling*.

The underſtanding will undoubtedly improve by exerciſe; a readineſs in apprehending the doctrines contained in the ſcriptures, will increaſe by a conſtant and careful ſtudy of the ſcriptures, joined with prayer to God for his bleſſing on the means. And juſt ſo will the ſtudy of law, of phyſic, or of mathematics, increaſe

creaſe both the knowledge, and the facility of acquiring the knowledge, of law, phyſic, or mathematics. And ſuch knowledge ſhould alſo be ſought in the ſame manner as that of the ſcriptures—by diligence, and prayer for a bleſſing on the means: and in this ſenſe God may be ſaid to teach law and phyſic, as well as divinity. But yet no man's ordinary powers either of comprehending or inveſtigating truth, whether ſacred or prophane, are changed but through natural means. The underſtanding of a child will not inſtantly become that of a man, nor the underſtanding of one that is ſlow become quicker, merely becauſe the man becomes pious.

Mr. *Milner* inſiſts much on the neceſſity of a *ſpiritual underſtanding* *. If by this is meant, a temper of mind, teachable, unprejudiced, ready both to receive and obey divine truths, every one will aſſent: but ſuch a diſpoſition is not properly a ſtate of the underſtanding, but of the will and affections; and is not the ſtate of man by nature (with reſpect to divine truths), but is the gift of God through the ſpirit; and is as neceſſary for attaining the knowledge of divine truth, as impartiality is neceſſary for attaining the knowledge of hiſtorical or political truth †.

The

* Milner againſt Gibbon, p. 89.

† Thus it was with the Bereans. God was pleaſed, by his ſpirit, to remove their Jewiſh prejudices againſt the doctrine of a ſuffering Meſſiah, and the call of the gentiles, ſo that *they received the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched*

The natural faculty of underſtanding or apprehending truth, God hath given in a greater or leſs degree to all; but the diſpoſition to uſe and to apply this faculty impartially and effectually, in caſes where appetites and paſſions are concerned, is not ſo given: men of great underſtanding, and much knowledge, often want common prudence, even in matters relating to this life.

The words *ſpiritual underſtanding*, are undoubtedly ſcriptural, and may be found in the place to which Mr. Milner refers, Coloſſ. i. 9. But if we take theſe words in their moſt literal meaning, it will be difficult to make ſenſe of the Apoſtle's prayer—*That ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding.* A knowledge *in wiſdom and underſtanding*, ſeems at beſt tautology; but if *wiſdom* and *ſpiritual underſtanding* are put for a ſtate of the will and affections, the whole will be clear and pertinent. The Apoſtle prays that the Coloſſians might not only perceive in their mind (that is, *know*) clearly and fully what the will of God is; but alſo that ſuch (abſtract) knowledge might be accompanied with a proper diſpoſition of the will, and a ſuitable ſtate of the affections; that they *might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing*, as he immediately adds.

the ſcriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo. And the conſequence was, *many of them believed.*

That

That this is a ſcriptural ſenſe of the words *wiſdom* and *underſtanding*, has been in part ſhown, and will be further conſidered preſently: that knowledge is here uſed in its moſt literal ſenſe, will not be doubted*. The very ſame ſentiment is expreſſed in nearly the ſame language, Eph. i. 17.

But Mr. Milner ſeems to take the word *underſtanding* in the moſt literal ſenſe; and he proves the neceſſity of a ſpiritual, or rather ſupernatural, underſtanding, from two conſiderations; both of them arguments *a priori*. Firſt, "That every ſcience has certain rules within it-"ſelf, which the maſter has a right to impoſe "upon his diſciples."

Every ſcience has indeed ſome firſt principles, which you are to acknowledge as true, without any other proof than the conviction which naturally attends them. But what rules or orders has arithmetic, has geometry? Euclid impoſes none: and when God is ſaid to be the *preceptor* of his creatures, is it in any other way than through the inſtruction of books or men? The proof that he is, muſt reſt on thoſe who affirm it.

But it is ſaid (and by many†), ſecondly, "That "without this ſpiritual underſtanding, the ſcrip-

* Knowledge, when uſed for a ſtate of the affections, is joined with another word, as knowledge of God or of Chriſt. Iſaiah, xi. 9. Coloſſ. i. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

† So ſays Hervey. Letters, vol. ii. p. 62.

"tures

" tures are inſufficient for the purpoſe for which " they were given." And what is that purpoſe?— every particular man's ſalvation. And ſurely this is conſiſtent both with ignorance and error; and requires not an infallible divine teaching, an informing of the underſtanding, different from, and ſuperior to, that which can be obtained from men or books, by the uſe of our rational faculties only. Nor will the ſcriptures be *uſeleſs*, although we are left to ſearch out their ſenſe by the ſame fallible means by which we ſearch out the ſenſe of any other book. There is much difference between a ſtate of the mind, diſpoſed to uſe the (natural) means, and fitted to receive divine truths; and the means themſelves, of finding divine truths: theſe ſhould not be confounded *.

Mr. Milner plainly conſiders this ſpiritual underſtanding as a ſupernatural faculty: hear how he deſcribes it †. It is, ſays he, a new perceptive faculty; and it is by this faculty, and not from the beſt uſe of the moſt improved rational faculties, that any man has a proper perception of real Chriſtianity. The reaſon of man, ſays he, is inimical to this Spirit of God. Without this new perceptive organ, a man can no more have a real knowledge of Chriſt crucified, than a blind man can have of colours. The ſpirit of

* Venn's Duty of Man, p. 179, edit. 3.
† Milner againſt Gibbon, p. 157, &c.

Chriſt

Chriſt thus imparted, communicates a new world of ideas, inexplicable to others, as the ways of the incomprehenſible God.

Laſtly, on having this ſpiritual perception (ſays Mr. Milner, p. 159), all happineſs, and ETERNAL LIFE ITSELF, depends! And the evidence whether a man be poſſeſſed of this new perceptive ſpiritual faculty is, *the conformity of his experience with the written word:* an equivocal teſt this, not mentioned by the Apoſtles. Are we to compare the circumſtances of our lives with the circumſtances of thoſe who certainly had divine inſtruction, heard unſpeakable things, and had indeed a new world of ideas communicated to them by the Spirit of God?

The ſcriptural proof that all true Chriſtians have ſuch communications, Mr. M. reſts principally on 1 Cor. ii. to which chapter he ſolicits our attention: let us accept his invitation and follow his lead. Mr. Locke (ſays he, p. 160) miſtakes the ſenſe of that text, 1 Cor. ii. 9, when he underſtands it of the revelations made to St. Paul in his miraculous ecſtaſy. And Mr. M. we apprehend is no leſs miſtaken, when he underſtands it "*of thoſe precious ſenſations and diſcoveries*, "communicated by the ſpirit to every believer in "every age."—Let us attend to the context. In the verſes preceding verſe the 9th, St. Paul ſpeaks of the wiſdom of God, in oppoſition to the wiſdom of this world (the Grecian philoſophy, always

ways called wiſdom, 1. Cor. iii. 19). He ſpeaks of the hidden wiſdom which God ordained before the world, which none of the princes (the great men) of this world knew, &c. Now let any one compare this with Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Coloſſ. i. 26, 27; Eph. i. 9. iii. 3. vi. 19, and many other paſſages of ſcripture, and there cannot remain a doubt but by *the wiſdom of God in a myſtery*, in 1 Cor. ii. 7, is meant the myſtery of the redemption of mankind by the ſacrifice of Chriſt upon the croſs: and the verſe following, that is, the 9th, refers to the bleſſings conſequent upon it both in this life and that which is to come, viz. reconciliation and acceptance (that is, juſtification), regeneration, and the aid of the Holy Spirit in this world; life and immortality in the world to come; all which were myſteries*, that is, ſecrets, which *eye had not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man.* But God (ſays St. Paul) hath now revealed them unto us (his Apoſtles) by his ſpirit; that ſpirit which ſearcheth the deep things of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us (to mankind) of God; which things we (the Apoſtles) ſpeak (that is, preach); not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.—But the natural man receiveth them not, verſes 10—14.

* So they are called, 1 Cor. iv. 1.

Without

Without entering into the preciſe meaning of theſe laſt verſes*, it ſeems evident that verſes 10, 11, 12, and 13, deſcribe the way in which the Apoſtles received their knowledge of theſe myſteries, and their qualification for teaching them to others. But all do not receive theſe new truths revealed by the ſpirit of God (verſe 14): the Apoſtle then deſcribes the character of thoſe who reject them, and the reaſon of their ſo doing. The Apoſtle therefore ſpeaks, in verſe 6 to verſe 13, of the *diſcoveries* communicated to themſelves only, and to himſelf in particular; which was by the immediate revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, as himſelf ſays, Gal. i. 12. And he ſays both of himſelf and the other Apoſtles, that their ſufficiency was of God, who had made them able miniſters of the New Teſtament, 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. Both their ſufficiency in point of knowledge of the goſpel myſtery, otherwiſe called the myſtery of Chriſt, Eph. iii. 4 (a knowledge this, given by inſpiration, complete, and without error)—and alſo their ſufficiency in point of perſonal qualifications, ſuch as zeal, courage, and

* When it is ſaid, "the natural man cannot *know* them," that is, the things freely given us of God, or the goſpel privileges, ought we not to take the word *know* in the common ſcriptural ſenſe, as Heb. viii. 11, and therefore conclude that the words *cannot know*, do not import an inability in the head, but a perverſeneſs of the heart, that will not give them an impartial examination?

utter-

utterance, which were likewiſe of God *.—We now leave it to the reader to determine, whether this chapter is written *profeſſedly* on that inſpiration of the ſpirit, which is common to all chriſtians in all ages †; or whether it be not chiefly on that which was peculiar to the Apoſtles, and which enabled them both to preach the goſpel, and to write the ſcriptures.

But there are writers who perhaps do not wholly agree with Mr. M. and yet contend for the neceſſity of a *divine teaching* (in the moſt literal ſenſe), in order to underſtand the ſcriptures.

* And ſo, we apprehend, is the ſufficiency of miniſters at this day, in reſpect of zeal, courage, utterance, &c. But their ſufficiency in point of knowledge muſt depend on a diligent ſtudy of the ſcriptures; not on divine communications, as it was in the Apoſtles time.

† In page 92 Mr. M. ſays, "He that denies the neceſſity of divine illumination, in order to underſtand the "ſcriptures, might as well deny the divine inſpiration of "the ſcriptures themſelves."

If by *underſtanding the ſcriptures* he means underſtanding the whole, and without error, a divine illumination is indeed neceſſary for every man; but we deny that ſuch an underſtanding of the ſcriptures is neceſſary for ſalvation. Nevertheleſs it is the duty of every one to endeavour to underſtand all he can.

And though it is the duty of all, diligently to read the Bible, yet will their knowledge of divine truth differ exceedingly, both in clearneſs and extent, according to age, natural capacity, and literary improvements. A divine illumination of the underſtanding would ſet all perſons upon a level, as it did the illiterate fiſhermen of Galilee.

The

The paſſages of ſcripture on which they ground their opinion are chiefly thoſe in which the word *teach* occurs.

Now the word *teach*, in its common and literal acceptation, means to *inſtruct* another, to *inform* his underſtanding. Knowledge is defined by Mr. Locke to be, "the perception of the "agreement or diſagreement of ideas in the "mind." But there is a ſcriptural ſenſe of many common words, different from their literal ſenſe; which ariſes from, and can only be determined by, their frequent uſe in the Bible *. Among others, the words *wiſdom*, *underſtanding*, *knowledge*, &c. are uſed, not for the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of ideas, but for a diſpoſition of the will, or a ſtate of the affections. *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom; and to depart from evil, is underſtanding.* Job, xxviii. 28: and we might quote almoſt the whole book of Proverbs. Teaching is uſed for making a change in the will or the affections of another. *I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* Pſ. xxxiv. 11.—Again, *Teach the young women to be ſober, chaſte, keepers at home, obedient to their huſbands.* Titus, ii. 4. Now the writers of the New Teſtament do almoſt conſtantly adopt the language and metaphors of the Old Teſtament.

* Examples of this might be produced without end.—See Taylor's Key.

So

So St. James—*The wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle,* &c. iii. 17. *Wiſdom* here means an affection of the mind, a temper, a diſpoſition: wiſdom, if it import knowledge in Mr. Locke's ſenſe (and that is the common one), whether it be a knowledge of mathematical or theological truths, or any other, hath no moral character at all.—So again James, i. 5—*If any of you lack wiſdom, let him aſk of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.* What! a complete knowledge of all the doctrines, nay and of the myſteries too, of Chriſtianity? What! a power of underſtanding and interpreting infallibly all parts of ſcripture, and this equally to all perſons of every age, and every capacity? No ſuch thing! but God giveth to all that diſpoſition of the will, that ſtate of the affections, which alone can make the (abſtract) knowledge of the doctrines profitable, that is, conducive to ſalvation—affections which the knowledge of the truths both of natural and revealed religion ought to excite, but which in fact (that is, by nature) they do not ſufficiently excite; do not ſo excite, as to *ſtir up the will** to do what the underſtanding dictates and approves—affections which are in truth the gift of God †, who upbraideth

* Collect for the 25th Sunday after Trinity.

† Second Collect at Evening Prayer.

not

not us fallen mortals for the want of them. Thus, then, the teaching of the head muſt go firſt, and the teaching of the heart may, through God's grace, follow after *. When three thouſand were converted at one time, it was the preaching of Peter, and the eleven, that informed their underſtandings; but it was through the power of the ſpirit that they were pricked in their hearts.—Acts, ii.

So again it is ſaid, *All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord.* Iſaiah, liv. 13.—Vaſt ſtreſs is laid on this text. It is in the mouths of many who plainly underſtand it in the moſt literal ſenſe; as if all pious perſons were inſtructed immediately of God. But let us ſee how it is underſtood, and commented on, by our Lord himſelf: *No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him.* John, vi. 44, 45.—Does this metaphor, this *drawing*, import the informing of the underſtanding, or the inclining of the will and affections? Surely the latter. In the ſame ſenſe, John, xii. 32.—And yet this *drawing* is

* Affections without knowledge, is enthuſiaſm: knowledge without affections, is not religion; it is *indifferentiſm*, utterly unprofitable to ſalvation.

Moral character conſiſts in a ſtate of the will and affections, not in a ſtate of the underſtanding. Actions conſtitute moral character only ſo far forth, as they ſhow the ſtate of the will and affections. The office of the underſtanding is to direct the will, and to point out to the affections their proper object.

what Chriſt repreſents as exactly the ſame with the *teaching* in Iſaiah. Chriſt thus quotes Iſaiah: It is written in the prophets, *And they ſhall be all taught of God*—and he proceeds to ſay, *Every man therefore that hath heard* (my doctrine), *and hath learned of the Father* (not the doctrine, for that they learned of Chriſt himſelf), *cometh unto me.* Here is the effect, the criterion, of having *learned*, or being *taught*, of the Father: thoſe who are ſo taught, come unto Chriſt: his doctrine is not only literally underſtood, but alſo influences the will and affections: it is profitably underſtood. So alſo 1 Theſſ. iv. 9, where being *taught of God*, cannot poſſibly mean receiving inſtruction from God, but the having the affections influenced by the ſpirit of God.

It is frequently urged that Chriſt has promiſed, that the *ſpirit of truth ſhould lead his diſciples into all truth.* John, xvi. 13 *.—It is very evident, from the context, that this promiſe was to the Apoſtles only, and was to ſupply the unavoidable defects in what Chriſt had taught them perſonally. In verſe 12 he ſays: *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now:*

* Milner againſt Gibbon, p. 91; and Hervey's Letters vol. ii. p. 92. 116. Some add (for it is not in the text) *as far as is needful to ſalvation.* Some error then, it ſeems, is conſiſtent with ſalvation. But who ſhall ſay how much, or what? or who ſhall ſay how far either ignorance or error is ſinful or excuſable?

how-

howbeit, when he, the ſpirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth (or, all *the* truth); that is, manifeſtly, into the whole of the truth, which now ye know in part only *. And in reſpect to what Chriſt had taught them perſonally, a promiſe was given, that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould both teach them all things (which Chriſt had not taught them), and alſo bring all things to their remembrance which he had taught them: *Whatſoever I have ſaid unto you.* John, xiv. 26.

The Apoſtles were to be the teachers of all mankind. Their knowledge of the doctrines of Chriſt was both clear and complete: it was either a perfect recollection, with a clear and juſt underſtanding, both of what Chriſt himſelf had ſaid, and alſo of what the ſcriptures had ſaid concerning him†; or it was new knowledge immediately communicated to them by the ſpirit of God‡. Nor was this knowledge, like what

* In the latter part of this verſe it is ſaid, *He* (the ſpirit of truth), *will ſhew you things to come.*—This proves that what Chriſt ſays in this verſe, was directed to the Apoſtles only.

† Luke, xxiv. 45; John, ii. 19, 22; xii. 16.

‡ We are inclined to ſuppoſe the former was the caſe with the Apoſtles, who followed Chriſt; the latter was the peculiar caſe of St. Paul, being *one born out of due time.* The knowledge ſo acquired, the Apoſtles committed to writing: and this is the meaning, and all the meaning, of *inſpired writings*, notwithſtanding the whimſical diſtinctions of ſome divines—.See Dr. Powell's Diſcourſes, iv. and xv.

what is acquired by human means, attended with doubts and difficulties; it was neither obſcure nor ambiguous; nor were the Apoſtles in any uncertainty by what way they received it. Both the Apoſtles and Old Prophets expreſs themſelves with the utmoſt preciſion and confidence. The Prophets continually preface their declarations to the people with—*Thus ſaith the Lord:* and Micaiah to Ahab's meſſenger—*What the Lord ſaith unto me, that will I ſpeak.* Micaiah knew not, at that inſtant, what the Lord would ſay; it was revealed to him afterwards. So St. Paul—*I delivered unto you, firſt of all,* THAT WHICH I RECEIVED, *how that Chriſt died for our ſins.* And in his Epiſtle to the Galatians he declares that the Goſpel which he preached, was taught him by the immediate revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.

When the ſpirit commanded Peter to go along with the Roman ſoldier, and the houſehold ſervants of Cornelius, he had no doubts of the revelation, no doubts by what authority he was commanded to join the company of thoſe who

In reſpect to what is here ſaid (about the manner in which the Apoſtles were taught the Chriſtian doctrines), one doctrine ought to be excepted, viz. The Call of the Gentiles. In what manner Peter was taught this, and through him the other Apoſtles, is circumſtantially related in Acts, x. and xi.

were

were heathen, and *to go to one of another nation:* and the firſt chriſtians certainly knew when they did or did not uſe their ſpiritual gifts and powers. When they propheſied, that is, preached unto the people, they knew it was through the power, and by the authority, of the ſpirit *. And do thoſe who urge this text in Iſaiah, and the other texts beforementioned, like the Apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians, know when they are under this *divine teaching?*. Do they know the particular doctrines for which they have this great authority? or does this claim of being *taught of God*, ſtamp a general authority on all they hold? So it has been ſaid.—Mr. Hervey, we have been told, was a man of much prayer, ſpent a great part of his life in the ſtudy of the ſcriptures: his *principles* had an happy effect

* 1 Cor. xii. xiii. xiv. 30. 32. &c.

Preaching extempore, may be convenient, and may with propriety be attempted by a miniſter long uſed to compoſe his ſermons; it may ſave him the irkſome labour of much writing. But the common people often look upon extempore preaching as the gift, as the effuſion, of the ſpirit; like the gift of propheſying in the Apoſtolic age, beſtowed upon thoſe who had no previous qualification, and made no preparation for ſpeaking in public on religious ſubjects. We hope there are none who encourage this notion merely to give authority to the doctrines they preach, or an *eclat* to themſelves.

on him while living, and enabled him to die with compoſure *.

Now comes the ſly intimation—Therefore, when you differ from him, he may POSSIBLY, be in the right.—And all this may with equal truth be ſaid of the late Mr. Law, and of many pious papiſts, whoſe piety ſtamps no authority on their opinions: and what weight ought the opinion, the criticiſms, the interpretations of the pious Mr. Hervey, to have with us, more than thoſe of the learned Dr. Bentley? As far as the Calviniſt Hervey was *really unprejudiced*, as well as prayed to be ſo—as far as, being ready to do the will of God, he was averſe to no divine truths—ſo far his opinions may have weight; but in caſes where any thing more than common good ſenſe is required †, this piety may be eaſily overbalanced by the extenſive learning, the great parts, the critical diſcernment of a Bentley. It is true, theſe qualifications, without

* Mr. Hervey ſtyles himſelf a Calviniſt.—See his Letters, vol. ii. p. 91.

† Some articles of the Chriſtian Faith are ſo plain, that every man of common ſenſe, who has the Bible in his hand, is on a level with the profoundeſt ſcholar: for inſtance, the reſurrection of the dead, and a general judgement, are ſo clearly deſcribed, and ſo frequently aſſerted, in ſcripture, that he who runs may read: and I do not ſcruple to add, the forgiveneſs of ſins, and reconciliation through the ſacrifice of Chriſt on the croſs, called in ſcripture language *his blood*; or, as we call it, the Doctrine of the Atonement.

grace,

grace, could be no bleſſing to Bentley himſelf; but that does not hinder but that they may be uſeful to others.—After all, we muſt remember that neither the piety, the diligence, or the learning of any man, can give his opinions an authority ſuperior to ſcripture: and of the conformity of any opinions to ſcripture, every man has a right to judge for himſelf, without being cenſured or reviled for his deciſion.

We mean not, in any thing we have ſaid, to deny that he who formed the human mind, can give clearer ideas, quicker apprehenſions, or more extenſive views of the Chriſtian doctrines; can ſuggeſt to the mind ſuch a ſenſe of a difficult paſſage in ſcripture, as, when known, any one can abundantly confirm; but we deny that any man can *tell* that ſuch doctrines, or ſuch interpretations of ſcripture, are the ſuggeſtions of the ſpirit of truth. We cannot draw the line between what is natural and what is ſupernatural. We are too much in the dark about the nature of the divine agency and government, to diſcern of ourſelves how and when, and to what degree, God interpoſes; that is, adds to, interrupts, or changes his uſual method of conveying knowledge to our minds, or of governing the world.

The faculty we call INVENTION, is wonderful. A man wiſhes to contrive a machine for ſome purpoſe, or invent a demonſtration of a

mathematical propoſition. He tries ſome time in vain; all of a ſudden it *comes into his mind*, as it did to Archimedes in the bath: and you may call thoughts thus ſuddenly ſuggeſted, as the poets do, *inſpiration* *. It will be ſaid, all this was natural; for the water expelled by the body of the philoſopher, when he entered the bath, ſuggeſted the thought of making a ſimilar experiment on the golden crown of king Hiero. Be it ſo.—Similar accidental circumſtances may be the means of diſcovering the ſenſe of a paſſage in ſcripture, perhaps the *unperceived* means; but ſurely you ought not to claim a divine authority for your interpretation, either from the ſuddenneſs or the force with which it ſtrikes your mind. When God is pleaſed to interrupt the courſe of nature, in order to ſtamp his authority on a doctrine, his interpoſition is never equivocal.

The writers who ſpeak of a divine teaching, in the manner before mentioned, ſometimes conſider the ſpirit of truth as informing the mind wholly without human means; but moſt commonly as teaching the true ſenſe of ſcripture. " The ſpirit of God," ſays Mr. N. " re-
" veals no new truths, but only ſhows the mean-

* See Plutarch's tract—*Non poſſe ſuaviter vivere ſecundum Epicurum.*

" ing

" ing of his own written word *." And the Spirit of God is repreſented by Mr. S. as revealing the ſenſe of particular paſſages, in anſwer to prayer. And he ſolemnly declares that " he has prayed over many paſſages of ſcripture, " chapter by chapter, and verſe by verſe †." What he ſays, evidently ſhews that he expected a revelation of the ſenſe of theſe paſſages in anſwer to prayer; and he ſuppoſes that the doctrines he has embraced, are in this way the dictates of the ſpirit: in other words, that he was, in the moſt literal meaning of the phraſe, *taught of God* the true ſenſe of ſcripture.—An infallible interpreter of ſcripture, differs very little from an infallible judge of controverſy ‡.

* *Cardiphonia*, or Letters, in 2 vol. by Mr. Newton, vol. i. p. 189.—Another writer ſays, " The Holy Ghoſt makes " no new revelation in point of doctrine, *only gives efficacy* " to what is already revealed." Venn's Duty of Man, p. 184. ed. 3.—We ſubſcribe to this ſentiment.

† The Force of Truth, by Mr. Scott, morning preacher at the Lock Hoſpital, p. 164, 165. 198. Alſo Hervey's Letters, vol. ii. p. 91.

In p. 199 Mr. Scott ſays, " As ſurely as I believe God's " promiſe to be faithful, as ſurely as I believe him to be a God " that heareth prayer, ſo ſurely do I believe that fleſh and " blood hath not revealed to me the doctrines I now preach, " but God himſelf, by his Holy Spirit."

‡ Mr. Scott ſays that " John, vii. 16, 17, contains a di- " rection and promiſe;" which anſwers the purpoſe of a clue to extricate every ſincere enquirer after truth out of the labyrinth of controverſy. Force of Truth, p. 43.

But

But let us hear one of the moſt celebrated writers of this claſs, Mr. Hervey in his Letters, vol. ii. p. 62—" Men of ſuperior abilities too " often lean to their own underſtanding, and " reject the guidance, the teachings, of the Holy " Ghoſt: not becauſe theſe are not mentioned, " inſiſted upon, and promiſed in the goſpel; " but becauſe they fancy themſelves capable of " comprehending, without ſupernatural aid, the " wonderful works of God (Acts, ii. 11)."— Again, " I am deſirous of being taught by the " labours of learned men, more deſirous of be- " ing taught by the written word of Revelation; " but amidſt all, and above all, to be taught of " God: or, as our Liturgy very boldly, but not " improperly, explains the Prophet—taught by " the inſpiration of God's Holy Spirit *."

When Mr. Hervey in the ſame ſentence ſays, *taught* by the labours of learned men, *taught* by the written word of Revelation, *taught* of God; the common rules of conſtruction require us to underſtand the word *taught* in one and the ſame ſenſe in all three places. To be *taught of God*, then, here means, to have our underſtanding informed—to know what that information is—and by what means, or from whom, we receive ſuch

* Where is the Prophet (Iſaiah) ſo explained in the Liturgy? We ſhall conſider this afterwards.

in-

inſtruction; namely, from God himſelf. The teaching here ſpoken of, can mean no leſs than a divine teaching, in the moſt literal ſenſe of the word *teach*, and that we *know* it to be ſo.

Mr. H. ſays, ſuch a teaching is promiſed in the goſpel: he ſays not where; but he probably means in thoſe paſſages always quoted to ſhow this, viz. John, vi. 44; xvi. 13; James, i. 5, &c. which we have before conſidered. And he repreſents it as a preſumption, that we ſhould think ourſelves capable of comprehending, without ſupernatural aid, the *wonderful works of God**. Yet the ſtrangers at Jeruſalem, who heard the inſpired Apoſtles declare theſe very works, each in his own tongue, were capable of comprehending them, without ſupernatural aid. It is not repreſented as a miracle, that the ſtrangers ſhould underſtand the Apoſtles, but that the Apoſtles ſhould ſpeak theſe things in the language of every ſtranger.

After all, there is perhaps no other reaſon for Mr. Hervey's thus charging men of ſuperior abilities, in general, with rejecting the proper guidance, and the ſcriptural teaching, of the Holy Ghoſt; but that, in general, men of ſupe-

* Mr. Hervey quotes the Greek. If he expounds τὰ μεγαλῖια, to mean the great myſteries or ſecret councils of God in the Redemption of man, &c. I ſuppoſe not angels themſelves *comprehend* theſe. 1 Pet. i. 12.

rior

rior abilities do not agree with Mr. Hervey in his favourite points of divinity.

God hath given to men an underſtanding, which it is their duty to employ in ſearching out his will. The means he has appointed for the informing of their underſtanding, are hearing, reading, and all the helps to reading; but, above all, it is for this purpoſe that God has appointed, and ſtill ſupports, a goſpel miniſtry; ſo that not only men of letters, but the unlearned poor who are in need of inſtruction—and who are unable to get information from books, and cannot command the inſtruction of others—may yet have the goſpel preached to them. For miniſters are to inſtruct, as well as to exhort and rebuke. It is to the ſtated means of information, to Moſes and the prophets, that we are ſent by our Lord; and are told, if we expect or require ſupernatural means, they will be denied us*. And natural means alone, *as far as information goes*, are ſufficient to make every man, of every age or capacity, *wiſe*; not indeed *in the predeterminate council of God*, or the ſecrets of his diſpenſations; but *wiſe to his own ſalvation*. I ſay, *as far as information goes:* for the ſpirit of God is indeed wanted, to diſpoſe men to attend *ſeriouſly*, and without prejudice, to inſtruction; and to

* Luke, xvi. 29. 31.

give

give to what they read, or hear, its proper (beneficial) influence on the will and affections: elſe why do ſo many in vain ſit under the ſound of the goſpel; while to others, in the very ſame congregation, it is the wiſdom of God, and the power of God unto ſalvation?

When Solomon forbids us to *lean to our own underſtanding*, he forbids us to over-rate our own underſtanding; to ſuppoſe we underſtand what we do not, and perhaps what we cannot. He does not forbid us to *uſe* our underſtanding; no, nor the common helps to the underſtanding*. Yet Mr. Scott ſays of ſuch enquirers after truth, "that they hereby ſhew that they expect to "find it, not by truſting in the Lord, aſking "wiſdom of him, or ſeeking in the word of God, "and prayer to be taught of God; but by *lean-* "*ing to their own underſtanding*, reſting the ar- "gument on reaſonings and authorities, &c. †" Are we then to diſcard context and grammar, critics and commentators, and expect a revelation by the Holy Spirit of the true ſenſe of ſcripture? Be it ſo: yet, unleſs we perceive and are

* The Apoſtles, and Elders in the firſt age of the church, did not deſpiſe or reject the uſe of their natural underſtanding, although they had the ſpirit. When a diſpute aroſe about a point of doctrine, they *came together to* CONSIDER *of the matter*. Acts, xv.

† Force of Truth, p. 165.

aſſured

aſſured that the ſenſe we adopt is the revelation of the ſpirit, it will be of no authority at all. And, ſhould we ſatisfy ourſelves that it is ſo, how ſhall we ſatisfy others? without which we had better keep the revelation to ourſelves. There are none who with ſo much juſtice may be ſaid to *lean to their own underſtandings*, as two oppoſite ſorts of men—thoſe who eſpouſe a ſchool divinity, and thoſe who cry up a vain philoſophy; both equally unknown to ſcripture.

In the diſcourſes intitled Meſſiah *, it is ſaid, "The beſt knowledge of what relates to the perſon of Chriſt (his divine nature and origin), is "to be obtained, not ſo much by enquiry and "ſtudy on our part, as by a gracious manifeſtation on his part". Vol. ii. p. 31.—What is this manifeſtation, which ſupplies, or rather ſuperſedes, the neceſſity of enquiry and ſtudy on our part?

In theſe diſcourſes we are continually exhorted to give attention to the great teacher, to have a dependance on divine teaching, to ſubmit to the great teacher †. Chriſt is called the great teacher, who gives both knowledge and

* Meſſiah, two vols. of Sermons, by the Rev. Mr. Newton, rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, London.

† So alſo Mr. Milner, p. 99, talks of thoſe who *ſubmit to the teaching of the ſpirit*.

capa-

capacity *. Thoſe whom he teaches, learn what no human inſtruction can impart, &c.—Is Chriſt then the great teacher of all Chriſtians, in the ſame ſenſe that he was the great teacher of St. Paul, Gal. i. 12? In theſe, and innumerable other paſſages, it is left doubtful, whether we are to take ſuch expreſſions in the common and literal ſenſe, or in a ſcriptural but metaphorical ſenſe; whether we are to underſtand by Chriſt the great teacher, and this divine teaching, a teaching of the head or of the heart. It cannot but convey to the mind of moſt readers, an expectation of an immediate communication of religious truths (whether new ones, or the true ſenſe of the ſcriptures, it matters not), and that by the holy ſpirit of God, without the intervention of human means. We leave it to the conſideration of ſuch writers, whether, if they do believe they are in this manner taught of God, they do not ſay too little, when they ſtop ſhort of avowing ſuch divine communications in the moſt unequivocal terms, and claiming the authority of an inſpired Apoſtle? If

* Vol. i. p. 276. Serm. xv. The text to this ſermon, Mat. xi. 29, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek*, &c. is greatly miſunderſtood and miſapplied. Chriſt here propoſes himſelf an example of humility, &c. The idea of *teaching*, in its literal ſenſe, is never introduced; only the word *learn* occurs; from which this whole doctrine of a divine teaching, in the literal ſenſe is derived.

other-

otherwiſe, whether they do not ſay too much, when they uſe a language that cannot but ſuggeſt to every reader, that they have, in the moſt literal ſenſe, ſuch an authoritative teaching? And we may obſerve that the language of theſe writers, in ſpeaking either of the office of Chriſt as a prophet and teacher, or of the ordinary influence of the ſpirit on the minds of believers, although abounding in ſcriptural words, is by no means conſonant to the language of the Apoſtles. Compare not words, but the tenour of what theſe writers ſay, with the tenour of what the Apoſtles ſay.

So again, vol. i. p. 157—" When the obedi-
" ence of Chriſt unto death, is *revealed* by the
" Holy Spirit to the enlightened *conſcience*, it af-
" fords a clear and ſatisfactory diſcovery of recon-
" ciliation with God; it ſhews that, on his part,
" every hindrance to the free exerciſe of mercy
" is thereby removed, the honour of his law vin-
" dicated*, and the demands of his juſtice anſwer-
" ed." And a little after the author ſpeaks of the *cauſes*, the *nature*, and the *deſign* of the Redeemer's ſufferings, as being underſtood by us ſinners; and we muſt ſuppoſe by the revelation of the ſame

* This is not the language of the Apoſtles, who never talk of the *honour of God's law*, and its vindication, nor of the *demands of God's juſtice*; it is the language of the ſchools only.

ſpirit.

ſpirit. Does the ſpirit then reveal to us what were the hindrances, on God's part, to the free exerciſe of mercy? or how theſe were removed by the obedience of Chriſt unto death? how the demands of God's juſtice were anſwered, and the honour of his law vindicated? And are the *cauſes*, the *nature*, and *deſign* of that wonderful council of God (Acts, ii. 23) laid open to us by the teaching of the ſpirit? If the hindrance of the free exerciſe of mercy on God's part—if the cauſes, nature, and deſign of the Redeemer's ſufferings, as reſpecting the honour and juſtice of God, and all his attributes—are indeed made known to us, it muſt be by a ſpecial revelation; either a revelation of new truths, or, what is probably here intended, a revelation by the ſpirit, ſhowing the meaning of his own written word; ſuch a meaning as entirely ſuits the author's favourite doctrine of penal ſatisfaction *.

If Chriſt be, as was ſaid (vol. i. p. 277), "the "great teacher who not only inſtructs, but gives "the capacity to receive his ſublime inſtruc-"tions," then all who are thus taught will

* The whole of the paſſage here quoted, is both obſcure and ambiguous. For what is a revelation of the Holy Spirit to the enlightened *conſcience?* And, through the whole, it is hard to ſay, whether the author ſpeaks of a revelation, by the ſpirit of truth, reſpecting God's government, or reſpecting man's ſalvation.

finally arrive at the ſame degree of knowledge; and, what is more, will all agree in the ſame doctrines. Thoſe who are literally taught by the ſpirit of truth, muſt be taught alike, for truth is uniform *. But here the diſagreements among men of piety make a difficulty: to remove this, they have created an unſcriptural diſtinction of *eſſentials* and *non-eſſentials*. There are then certain capital doctrines, which we are told "muſt be known and *experienced* by all who are "taught of God. They, and they only, who "are thus taught, *are true Chriſtians* †." If you enquire eagerly what theſe *fundamentals* are (for ſo they are alſo called), you will be told, "they "are ſuch doctrines as ſpiritual perſons, who "really depend upon a divine teaching, are "agreed in." Still it will be aſked, who are theſe ſpiritual perſons? The anſwer at laſt will terminate in this—Thoſe who hold the ſame opinions that we do, and none elſe. And thus the argument will run round in a circle.

* Mr. Scott ſays, he is confident that all ſuch will in time be brought to the ſame concluſion in all things which he conſiders as eſſential to ſalvation. Force of Truth, p. 162. What theſe eſſentials are, he does not ſay.—See alſo p. 119.

The criterion, whether you are taught of God or not, will at laſt end in this—Do you hold the doctrines we do, at leaſt thoſe we call eſſentials? for *we* are taught of God.

† Meſſiah, vol. ii. p. 18.

Mr.

Mr. Milner ſums up all theſe fundamental truths in one, to which he ſays all the reſt are reducible. And what is that one concerning which he ſays, "all who deſerve the name of "believers are agreed in *?" It is this—"Jeſus "Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, "fully, freely, and eternally." Is it not plain, that, to evade the objection of a diſagreement among believers, he makes his fundamental truth ſo general and comprehenſive, as to take in not only every ſect of proteſtants, but papiſts, ſocinians, and perhaps mahometans too?—The ſocinian will ſay, The man Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners, "fully, freely, "and eternally," by his moral precepts and good example: and the mahometan allows Jeſus to be a prophet ſent from God; and joins him with Mahomet in the office of inſtructing, reforming, and ſaving mankind. Thoſe who pretend to draw the preciſe line between eſſentials and non-eſſentials, cannot agree among themſelves where to place it: and this ſhows the vanity of the attempt.

The misfortune is, when once the common people think they are thus literally taught of God, whether it be new truths, or the genuine ſenſe of ſcripture, they will ſoon ſet up for great

* Milner againſt Gibbon, p. 95. 99.

finally arrive at the ſame degree of knowledge; and, what is more, will all agree in the ſame doctrines. Thoſe who are literally taught by the ſpirit of truth, muſt be taught alike, for truth is uniform *. But here the diſagreements among men of piety make a difficulty: to remove this, they have created an unſcriptural diſtinction of *eſſentials* and *non-eſſentials*. There are then certain capital doctrines, which we are told "muſt be known and *experienced* by all who are "taught of God. They, and they only, who "are thus taught, *are true Chriſtians* †." If you enquire eagerly what theſe *fundamentals* are (for ſo they are alſo called), you will be told, "they "are ſuch doctrines as ſpiritual perſons, who "really depend upon a divine teaching, are "agreed in." Still it will be aſked, who are theſe ſpiritual perſons? The anſwer at laſt will terminate in this—Thoſe who hold the ſame opinions that we do, and none elſe. And thus the argument will run round in a circle.

* Mr. Scott ſays, he is confident that all ſuch will in time be brought to the ſame concluſion in all things which he conſiders as eſſential to ſalvation. Force of Truth, p. 162. What theſe eſſentials are, he does not ſay.—See alſo p. 119.

The criterion, whether you are taught of God or not, will at laſt end in this—Do you hold the doctrines we do, at leaſt thoſe we call eſſentials? for *we* are taught of God.

† Meſſiah, vol. ii. p. 18.

Mr.

Mr. Milner ſums up all theſe fundamental truths in one, to which he ſays all the reſt are reducible. And what is that one concerning which he ſays, "all who deſerve the name of "believers are agreed in *?" It is this—"Jeſus "Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, "fully, freely, and eternally." Is it not plain, that, to evade the objection of a diſagreement among believers, he makes his fundamental truth ſo general and comprehenſive, as to take in not only every ſect of proteſtants, but papiſts, ſocinians, and perhaps mahometans too?—The ſocinian will ſay, The man Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners, "fully, freely, "and eternally," by his moral precepts and good example: and the mahometan allows Jeſus to be a prophet ſent from God; and joins him with Mahomet in the office of inſtructing, reforming, and ſaving mankind. Thoſe who pretend to draw the preciſe line between eſſentials and non-eſſentials, cannot agree among themſelves where to place it: and this ſhows the vanity of the attempt.

The misfortune is, when once the common people think they are thus literally taught of God, whether it be new truths, or the genuine ſenſe of ſcripture, they will ſoon ſet up for great

* Milner againſt Gibbon, p. 95. 99.

divines; become proud, dogmatical, haters of all that differ from them in what they ſuppoſe eſſentials (and as the liſt of eſſentials is not yet made out, no one knows how far this may go): they will be proud, as poſſeſſing a knowledge ſuperior to others; dogmatical, becauſe they will ſuppoſe they certainly know the true ſenſe of ſcripture: and they will hate thoſe who differ from them in their favourite *dogmas*, whom they will conſider as ſo many prophane *Eſaus*, that deſpiſe the Chriſtians birthright, contemptuouſly *refuſe to ſubmit to Chriſt, the great teacher*, and do deſpite to the ſpirit of grace. And being poſſeſſed of ſuch ſuperior means of obtaining divine knowledge, they will deſpiſe all human means; look upon human learning as worſe than uſeleſs, as an enemy to the Chriſtian revelation. In the mean time, men of ſound underſtanding, and real learning, in what is called philology and the ſciences, diſguſted with the nonſenſe of ſuch pretenders, too haſtily conclude that the Chriſtian revelation is at variance with common ſenſe, and deny all influence of the ſpirit whatever; and not unfrequently deny a doctrine of natural religion, very near of kin to this—that *the hearts of kings are in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth them whitherſoever he will.*

They

They who deny the influence of God over the minds of men (not more perceptible, nor more incomprehenſible, than the influence of the Holy Spirit in the Chriſtian ſyſtem), do virtually deny God's government over the world, and in effect ſink us into downright Atheiſm.

And now, my dear Sir, you will ſee what it is I aim at. The offices, the very being, of the Holy Spirit, are too often denied in theſe days; I wiſh the writings of ſome pious perſons have not contributed to it: thus much muſt be ſaid, that they expreſs themſelves with an *hurtful ambiguity*. It is true they uſe the words, and ſometimes (not always) the language, of ſcripture; yet treating what is plainly a metaphorical way of ſpeaking, as if it were always to be underſtood in the literal ſenſe of the Engliſh words. How far this has not only miſled others, but even themſelves, is not for me to determine: whatever be the caſe, I would by no means have you think leſs favourably of the men, whether dead or living; though you muſt think leſs favourably of *ſome parts* of their writings. Such perſons as Hervey, &c. ever have been the moſt uſeful part of the parochial clergy; none exceed them in fervent zeal for the goſpel, or diligence in every part of the paſtoral office: and when they keep clear of all preten-

ſions,

ſions to the ſupernatural inſtruction of the Spirit, and all ſcholaſtic explanations of myſteries which the ſcripture has not explained—and ſome other abſtruſe points, which in truth they do not often touch upon—they are moſt excellent, moſt uſeful preachers; in real earneſt themſelves, which is the only poſſible way by which our hearers can be brought to be in earneſt too. I therefore wiſh you always *to eſteem ſuch very highly in love for their works ſake.*

That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who has purchaſed to himſelf an univerſal Church by his moſt precious blood, may give his grace to you, and to all who are admitted into any office or adminiſtration in the ſame, is the prayer of

Your affectionate brother and ſervant,

W. L.

P. S. Mr. Hervey ſays, with his uſual openneſs, "I am deſirous of being taught by the "labours of learned men, more deſirous of being "taught by the written word of Revelation; but "amidſt all, and above all, to be taught of God; "or, as our Liturgy very boldly but not improperly explains the Prophet, taught by the "inſpiration of God's Holy Spirit." Letters, vol. ii. p. 62.

Mr. Hervey has not quoted the place in the Liturgy, were the Prophet (Iſaiah) is ſo explained. The paſſage which comes the neareſt to

Mr.

Mr. Hervey's words, is in the communion office, were we pray, "that God would cleanse the "thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of "his Holy Spirit." But is this like a prayer for the teaching or informing our understanding by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? And the effect of this inspiration, for which we pray, is immediately described—"that we may perfect-"ly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy "name." Plainly this, an influence upon the affections, the spring of all action; and thus, through the affections, an influence upon our lives and actions.

The fifth Sunday after Easter—"Grant that, "by thy holy inspiration, we may think those "things that be good, and by thy merciful guid-"ance may perform the same:" that is, the things that be good, not the things that be true; this would hardly be sense. Here is no reference to a teaching of doctrines by the inspiration of the spirit: we desire that our minds may be occupied, and that our wills may be disposed to seek the things that be good; and that we may be enabled to perform the same.

At evening prayer—"O God, from whom all "holy desires, all good councils, and all just "works do proceed."

The

The firſt Sunday after Epiphany—"Grant that "we may both perceive and know what things "we ought to do, and alſo may have grace and "power faithfully to fulfil the ſame:"—*perceive and know*, by ſuch means as God has appointed, whatever thoſe are.

Whitſunday—"God, who as at this time didſt "teach the HEARTS* of thy faithful people, "grant us by thy ſpirit to have a right judge-"ment in all things"—the very words of St. Paul, before conſidered. We pray for a bleſſing on the ſtated means of information, that they may prove effectual; we do not pray for a particular information of the ſpirit, ſhowing us either new truths, or the genuine ſenſe of ſcripture.

Chriſtmas day—"Grant that we, being re-"generate, may be daily renewed by thy Holy "Spirit."

Regeneration is a change of the heart (Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26), a change in the will and affections (through the ſpirit), and has nothing to do with the underſtanding; it makes no alteration in our natural powers of comprehending, or inveſtigating truth.

* It is with great propriety the Church prays (after rehearſing each of the Commandments)—"Lord, have mercy up-"on us, and INCLINE OUR HEARTS to keep this Law." This is the proper teaching of the ſpirit.

In

In the Litany we pray, "that it may pleaſe "thee to illuminate all biſhops, prieſts, and "deacons with true knowledge and underſtan-"ding of thy word." Here alſo is the ſame ſentiment with that expreſſed in the collect for Whitſunday, and grounded on the ſame ſcripture (2 Tim. ii. 7). We pray in general terms for a bleſſing on the ſtudies of the clergy, on the ordinary and fallible means of inveſtigating the ſenſe of ſcripture; not that God would give them the infallible teaching of his Holy Spirit, whether it be of the ſenſe of any particular paſſage, or in general of the whole of Holy Scripture. The Church of England acknowledges no divine authority, no infallibility (which ſuch a teaching would confer, and might be juſtly claimed), either in a ſingle perſon, or in a collective body of men *, although the moſt learned and the moſt pious of their times.

* Article xxi.

FINIS.

2 AP 63

BOOKS *lately published by* L. DAVIS.

1. ESSAYS on SCRIPTURE METAPHORS, DIVINE JUSTICE, DIVINE MERCY, and the DOCTRINE of SATISFACTION. By W. LUDLAM, B. D. Price 2s 6d.

2. DISCOURSES on VARIOUS SUBJECTS, by THOMAS BALGUY, D. D. Archdeacon of Winchester. 5s.

3. Dr. Balguy's DIVINE BENEVOLENCE ASSERTED, and vindicated from the Objections of ancient and modern Sceptics. 2s 6d.

4. An ESSAY on REDEMPTION, by the late JOHN BALGUY, A. M. 2s 6d.

5. DISCOURSES on VARIOUS SUBJECTS, by W. S. POWELL, D. D. Master of St. John's College, Cambridge. 5s.

6. A KEY to the NEW TESTAMENT: giving an Account of the Several Books, their Contents, their Authors, and the Times, Places, and Occasions on which they were respectively written. By THOMAS PERCY, D. D. Lord Bishop of Dromore. 2s 6d

7. DISCOURSES on SEVERAL SUBJECTS, preached at the Cathedral Church of Winchester, by JAMES WEBSTER, B. D. Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. 4s

8. THE PASSION: or, A Descriptive and Critical Narrative of the Incidents, as they occurred on each Day of the Week, in which Christ's Sufferings are commemorated. By THOMAS KNOWLES, D. D. Prebendary of Ely. 3s.

9. The Rev. Mr. Towne's CRITICAL INQUIRY into the Opinions and Practice of the Ancient Philosophers, concerning the Nature of the Soul and a Future State; and their Method of a DOUBLE DOCTRINE; with a Preface by Bp. Warburton. 4s.

10. A Free

BOOKS *lately published by* L. DAVIS.

10. A Free and Candid Examination of the Principles advanced in Bishop Sherlock's very elegant Sermons, and in his Discourses on Prophecy: wherein the commonly received System, concerning the Natures of the Jewish and Christian Dispensations, is particularly considered. By the Rev. Mr. Towne. 4s.

11. The HISTORY of ENGLAND, as it relates to RELIGION and the CHURCH, from the earliest Accounts, to the present Century. By Ferdinando Warner, L. L. D. 2 vol. folio.

Very speedily will be published, in one volume 8vo.,

THESAURUS ECCLESIASTICUS: an Improved and Complete Edition of the LIBER VALORUM; containing the Valuations of all the Ecclesiastical Benefices in England and Wales; their Charge in the King's Book; the real Value, where it could be obtained; the Patron's Name, or Description; and the Tenths. Also Papers of Information and Direction, on Ordination, Tithes, and other Subjects. With a copious and accurate Index of all the Livings.—By the Rev. JOHN LLOYD, late of *Jesus College, Oxford.*

2 AP 63